NCA
VOC FOR IOP/FN
BACKGROUNDER NO. 5-5769 APRIL 27, 1978
DOLPH HAERING/MUNICH

BONN-PEKING LINKS

ANNCR:

CHINA'S FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER RECENTLY PAID A VISIT TO BONN, AND A CHINESE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER HAS SCHEDULED HIS VISIT FOR NEXT MONTH. FOR A BACKGROUND REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF BONN-PEKING RELATIONS, HERE IS VOA'S DOLPH HAERING.

VOICE:

SINCE WEST GERMANY AND THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS SIX YEARS AGO, HIGH LEVEL CONTACTS HAVE BEEN MOSTLY A ONE-WAY AFFAIR. WHILE A GROWING NUMBER OF LEADING WEST GERMANS, INCLUDING CHANCELOR HELMUT SCHMIDT, HAVE VISITED CHINA OVER THE YEAR, IT WAS NOT UNTIL EARLY THIS MONTH THAT THE FIRST PEKING CABINET MEMBER -- FOREIGN TRADE MINISTER LI CHIANG -- VISITED WEST GERMANY. NEXT MONTH, CHINESE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER KU MU IS EXPECTED TO VISIT BONN.

WHILE CHINA IS PRIMARILY TRYING TO INTENSIFY CONTACTS WITH NEIGHBORING ASIAN COUNTRIES, WEST GERMANY AND OTHER WEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES HAVE BECOME AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN CHINA'S FOREIGN POLICY -- MOSTLY A REFLECTION, IT SEEMS, OF PEKING'S PROBLEMS WITH MOSCOW. PEKING HAS BEEN WARNING WEST EUROPE AGAINST WHAT IT CALLS THREATENING SOVIET MILITARY EXPANSIONISM.

A WEST GERMAN DEFENSE EXPERT WHO RECENTLY RETURNED FROM CHINA, SAID PEKING IS INTERESTED IN BUYING GERMAN ANTI-TANK WEAPONS. BUT, IN VIEW OF BONN'S RELUCTANCE TO SELL WEAPONS ABROAD, HE SAID, CHINA WILL GET THESE RATHER FROM FRANCE. MOSCOW'S CONCERN WAS REFLECTED IN A TASS COMMENTARY WARNING WEST EUROPE THAT SELLING OF WEAPONS TO CHINA WOULD CONSTITUTE A VIOLATION OF THE HELSINKI ACCORD.

CHINA IS SAID TO HIGHLY REGARD GERMAN WEAPONS. THIS MAY EXPLAIN WHY A GROUP OF BONN PARLIAMENTARIANS AND FORMER GENERALS AND NATO OFFICERS, DURING THEIR RECENT VISIT TO CHINA, WERE GRANTED AN EXCEPTIONALLY CLOSE LOOK AT CHINESE MILITARY UNITS. THEY WERE THE FIRST FOREIGN GROUP TO VIEW A CHINESE AIRBORNE DIVISION AND WERE BRIFFED IN DETAIL ABOUT CHINESE FIGHTER JETS.

THE EXPANSION OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS WAS THE FOCUS OF RECENT CHINESE-WEST GERMAN TALKS IN BONN. AMONG OTHER THINGS, CHINA IS SAID TO BE INTERESTED IN PURCHASING THE MEDIUM-RANGE AIRBUS JET, JOINTLY PRODUCED BY FRANCE AND WEST GERMANY. CHINESE OFFICIALS HAVE MADE NO SECRET OF THE FACT THAT CHINA IS NOW TRYING TO CATCH UP WITH INTERNATIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS.

THERE ARE ALSO REPORTS THAT THE STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM BETWEEN WEST GERMANY AND CHINA IS TO BE EXTENDED AND THAT GERMAN-SPEAKING CHINESE UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS WILL BE SENT TO WEST GERMANY TO BUILT UP THEIR PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE.

JS/PY